



HRSC-SW BULLETIN

SUBJECT: TSP OPEN SEASON

November 15, 2001 - January 31, 2002

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Date Issued: November 5, 2001

INTENDED AUDIENCE:
HRSC SERVICED EMPLOYEES

The next Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) open season begins November 15, 2001 and ends January 31, 2002. During the open season, you may begin contributing to the TSP or change the amount of your TSP contribution. **Contribution limits effective in January 2002:** 12% for FERS employees and 7% for CSRS employees. **IRS annual deferral limit for 2001:** \$10,500.00 **IRS annual deferral limit for 2002:** \$11,000.00

How to make a contribution election. You can now submit your open season election through the Employee Benefits Information System (EBIS). The EBIS is a World Wide Web application that allows you to access general and personal benefit information and to conduct electronic transactions 24 hours a day/7 days a week using a desktop computer that has access to the Internet. Internet-accessible computers are available at many work sites, HRO Self-service Centers, libraries or commercial printing shops (i.e. Kinko's). By submitting your TSP open season election through the EBIS, you eliminate the need to submit a hard copy form, and alleviate any concern that a form might not reach the HRSC-SW, Benefits and Performance Division in time to meet the established deadline of January 31, 2002.

To access EBIS, go to the Department of the Navy Civilian Information Center Web site at www.civilianbenefits.hroc.navy.mil. The screens will guide you through establishing your user account. If you have problems creating a user account or other questions about EBIS, please contact the HRSC-SW, Benefits and Performance Division at 1-800-831-0622, ext. 5554 or (619) 615-5554.

If you chose to submit a hard copy TSP-1 election form, this form is available through the EBIS web site without establishing a user account, or from the HRSC-SW. If you request a hard copy TSP-1 from the HRSC-SW, it should be requested in enough time to allow the form to be mailed to you and the completed form returned to HRSC-SW prior to the end of open season. To be considered timely, open season elections that are submitted via hard copy form must be signed by the employee and either postmarked or received at HRSC-SW, Benefits and Performance Division by January 31, 2002. Employees should mail their completed election forms directly to: Human Resources Service Center, Southwest, Benefits and Performance Division Code 43, 525 B Street, Suite 600, San Diego, CA 92101-4418.

Hardcopy TSP-1 forms should not be submitted to your on-site HRO or your command's administrative department.

HRSC-SOUTHWEST , 525 B Street, Suite 600, San Diego CA 92101 619-615-5518 DSN 245-5518

When elections become effective. If you input your own election into EBIS between November 15, 2001 and January 12, 2002, it will become effective the first full pay period in January 2002 (pay period beginning January 13, 2002). Elections input by an employee into EBIS on January 13, 2002 but no later than January 26, 2002 will become effective the first full pay period after the employee inputs the election into EBIS (pay period beginning January 27, 2002). Elections input into EBIS from January 27 through January 31, 2002 will become effective the first full pay period after the employee inputs the election into EBIS (pay period beginning February 10, 2002).

If a hardcopy TSP-1 is submitted and received in the HRSC-SW between November 15, 2001 and January 12, 2002, it will become effective the first full pay period in January 2002 (pay period beginning January 13, 2002). In addition, hard copy forms received in the HRSC-SW after January 12, 2002 but postmarked by that date will be considered timely for the first effective date of January 13, 2002. Your Leave and Earnings Statement (LES) dated February 1, 2002 will reflect such elections.

Hardcopy TSP-1 forms received in the HRSC-SW January 13, 2002 and later, but not postmarked by January 12, 2002, will have later effective dates (either January 27, 2002 or February 10, 2002, depending on when they are received and/or postmarked). In any event, hard copy forms postmarked later than January 31, 2002 will not be processed without documentation from the employee that clearly shows circumstances beyond the employee's control prevented a timely submission. Decisions on belated elections will be made on a case-by-case basis.

In order to avoid disappointment, employees are encouraged to use EBIS to make their own timely elections no later than January 31, 2002.

How to allocate contributions. To allocate your contributions among the five investment funds, you must use the TSP web site at www.tsp.gov (Account Access Section), or call the TSP ThriftLine at (504) 255-8777, or submit a Form TSP-50, Investment Allocation. If you use the web site or the ThriftLine, you will need your Social Security number (SSN) and your TSP Personal Identification Number (PIN). By using the web site or the ThriftLine, your request is recorded immediately, avoiding the mailing and processing time of a paper request. If you chose to use a TSP-50 form, be aware that it is the only TSP form that is not available from the web site. This is because the form is designed to be read by an optical scanner, and if it were downloaded from the web, this might not be possible. Also, for this reason, you may not submit a photocopy of the form. TSP-50 forms may be requested from the HRSC-SW, Benefits and Performance Division. Completed TSP-50 forms are to be mailed directly to TSP Service Office, National Finance Center, P.O. Box 60012, New Orleans, LA 70160-0012.

Do not submit completed TSP-50 forms to your local HRO, Administrative Department or the HRSC-SW.

Questions regarding TSP Open Season or the use of EBIS should be directed to the HRSC-SW, Benefits Division at (619) 615-5554, DSN 245-5554, 1-800-831-0622 ext. 5554, or via email at benefits@sw.hroc.navy.mil.